

pastime remained a white-only sport. On April 10, 1947, Jackie Robinson broke the color barrier in major league baseball, ending 71 years of exclusion for African-American athletes, when he was signed by Brooklyn Dodgers president Branch Rickey.

Jackie's path breaking career in professional baseball began on October 23, 1945, when he was signed to the Montreal Royals, the Dodgers' Triple-A farm team, as the first African-American player in the minor leagues. In his first game, Jackie led the Royals to a 14-1 victory over Jersey City Giants winning the respect and admiration of Montreal and Jersey City fans alike. As he remembered, "the crowd just mobbed me. Kids were chasing me * * * to get my autograph and grown people were patting me on the back * * * I was convinced that American sports fans are truly democratic * * * that they would accept me—they didn't care what color a player was."

Jackie went on to play as first baseman for the Brooklyn Dodgers in April 1947 and was named National League Rookie of the Year. During his 10 years on the Dodgers the team won the pennant six times and the World Series in 1955. When Jackie retired in 1957 he had played every position but pitcher and catcher, and boasted a .311 lifetime major-league average, with 1,518 hits, 947 runs, 273 doubles, and 734 RBI's. He was named the National League's Most Valued Player in 1949 and to the Baseball Hall of Fame at the first election he was eligible on July 6, 1962.

In this, the golden anniversary of major league baseball's desegregation, I ask Members to join me in honoring Mr. Jackie Robinson and the American ideals of opportunity and equality which make our Nation great.

25 YEARS OF SERVICE TO SOUTH LYON

HON. JOE KNOLLENBERG

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 12, 1997

Mr. KNOLLENBERG. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor a loyal and dedicated officer to the community of South Lyon in Oakland County, MI. David LaFond celebrated his 25th year on the South Lyon police force on January 26, 1997.

David began his career in law enforcement on August 11, 1963, with the city of Northville. He transferred to South Lyon in 1972 and has served 25 dedicated years since.

He was promoted to sergeant in 1977 and in 1990, became the first lieutenant in South Lyon police history. Currently, David serves as the second in command of the South Lyon department and, for the past 12 years, has been the officer in charge of all department investigations.

Mr. LaFond has been awarded many citations and letters of commendation during his years of service. He has acted as director of public safety and served on the West Oakland major crime team since its inception. In 1994, he was elected the team coordinator.

The dedication of David LaFond exemplifies his commitment to making South Lyon a safer place for our families. He is a loyal public servant who deserves the recognition, honors, and accolades he receives.

REPEAL THE ESTATE TAX

HON. BOB STUMP

OF ARIZONA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 12, 1997

Mr. STUMP. Mr. Speaker, among the taxes the Internal Revenue Service collects, the estate tax ranks as one of the most unfair. With top rates reaching as high as 55 percent, the estate tax can and does force the sale of family businesses, farms, and ranches to satisfy the tax collectors.

Mr. Speaker, I think it's safe to say that most people work for themselves and their families. They do not spend long hours and many years building a successful business or family farm so that when they die, the Government can step in and take the fruits of their labors. Yet, that is exactly what the estate tax allows.

Though they account for only 1 percent of Federal revenues, estate taxes have forced the sale of thousands of farms, ranches, and businesses throughout this country. We can only guess at the jobs and economic potential lost through this process. One study concluded that one-third of all small business owners will have to sell all or part of their businesses to pay estate taxes—70 percent of that group will have to cut their work force.

Estate taxes hit the agricultural sector particularly hard. American agriculture is filled with farmers who are rich only on paper. These "paper millionaires" know that the value of their farms is not in the IRS valuation of their equipment and land, but in the farm's ability to produce agricultural products. Farmers make their living growing food and fiber, not speculating in land and equipment.

Mr. Speaker, I am today introducing legislation to repeal the estate tax. After a lifetime of hard work and sacrifice, the family business owner, farmer, and rancher should not be faced with the prospect of losing it all to the tax man.

IN CELEBRATION OF BLACK HISTORY MONTH

SPEECH OF

HON. RONALD V. DELLUMS

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 11, 1997

Mr. DELLUMS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in commemoration of Black History Month. The observation of Black History Month dates back to 1926 when African-American historian and scholar Dr. Carter G. Woodson introduced "Negro History Week," traditionally observed during the second week of February to coincide with the birthdays of Abraham Lincoln and Frederick Douglass, a personal hero. In 1976, this was expanded to include the entire month of February. In many communities, this has also been expanded with celebrations beginning with Kwanzaa in late December, continuing in January with the birthday celebration of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. through February, culminating in May with the birthday of Malcolm X. Of course, it goes without saying that black history is relevant everyday especially in the United States since it is inextricably linked to the history and development of this Nation.

I would like to take this opportunity to highlight one celebration that resonates personally. This past Sunday, February 9, the Pullman Blues Whistle Stop Tour departed Jack London Square in my hometown of Oakland, CA. This tour was created to coincide with a February 16 celebration by the Historic Pullman Foundation in honor of the thousands of African-American men and women who provided the Pullman Co. and the railroads of America with over a century of faithful service on the passenger trains of railroad's Golden Age.

My uncle, C.L. Dellums, for whom the Amtrak station at London Square is named, was a Pullman car porter. He was a colleague and comrade of A. Philip Randolph in the struggle to bring dignity to the jobs that were being performed by railroad workers. Their pioneering struggle that resulted in the creation of the first largely African-American trade union was a harbinger not only of future victories for worker rights—but it was a catalyst that led to some of the important and more general civil rights victories in our society. It is no small wonder that this movement succeeded, given the towering vision and the charismatic intellectual leadership of people like A. Philip Randolph and C.L. Dellums.

This cross country whistle stop tour via two private railroad cars began in Oakland, stopping over at Los Angeles, Kansas City, St. Louis, Chicago, and will end in the historic town of Pullman, IL. Cosponsors of this event include the A. Philip Randolph Institute, the NAACP, Amtrak, Twayne Publishers, and various private and union sponsors throughout the country.

Their efforts to highlight the work of thousands of African-American men and women in the railroad industry is an important and moving contribution to our continuing struggle to bring about equality of opportunity and an end to bigotry and intolerance in our Nation. We have so far to go to achieve equality, and we desperately need to remain engaged in this struggle—not just because the goal is so terribly important but because we need urgently to persuade our children that we continue to fight and struggle for their future as well.

I applaud their efforts and wish them the very best in their celebration.

SPECIAL TRIBUTE TO BENTLEY KASSAL

HON. CHARLES B. RANGEL

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 12, 1997

Mr. RANGEL. Mr. Speaker, and my colleagues of the House, I would like to take this opportunity to bring to your attention a very special person who is about to celebrate his 80th birthday on February 28, 1997.

I am speaking about Justice Bentley Kassal who has faithfully served the people of the State of New York for over 40 years. Bentley Kassal was born in New York City on February 28, 1917, to Pauline Nirenberg and Hyman Kassal, who arrived from Poland in 1914. He attended New York City public schools. He graduated from Townsend Harris High School and was a member of the varsity soccer and baseball teams. He was elected to the Townsend Harris hall of fame in April 1991 and received its Life Achievement Award in October 1989.